

Somaliland, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Djibouti. While we recognize that there are ongoing peace efforts in a number of these countries that will hopefully allow these refugees to repatriate in safety and dignity—the resolution of all the conflicts that have driven these refugees to flee may not be resolved in the near future, and Kenya may continue to be called upon to assist. We in the Congress acknowledge this generosity and sacrifice, and commend the Kenyan people for their efforts to help those in need.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH
BIRTHDAY OF ELSIE BOYD

HON. JUDY BIGGERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, in 1903, the first airplane took flight at Kitty Hawk in North Carolina. In that same year, the life of a constituent in my congressional district, Elsie Boyd, also took flight—and is still going strong a full 100 years later.

I proudly rise to join with the many people from my district who will help celebrate Elsie's 100th birthday on June 24.

Friends and family who know and love Elsie understand what keeps her going strong—and I do mean strong.

Elsie owns and lives in her own condominium.

She is active with the Methodist Church women and helps with neighborhood rummage sales.

She drives herself around town in a 1988 Chevy Nova and reads at least two hours each night—I hear she loves English history and any and every biography about Queen Victoria and Great Britain's royal families.

Simply put, Elsie is one of those people who lives life to the fullest, always views the glass as half full and turns the tables on the most difficult trials life has to offer.

According to her daughter Edie Boyd, "mom always looks at the positive side of life. That is why she is so successful and independent."

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I find to be the most inspiring about her life is the path she took to achieve professional success. After her paternal grandmother pulled the plug on high school and declared that her help was needed around the house, Elsie decided to earn her diploma by taking night courses—no small task for a young woman in the early part of the 20th century.

Fluent in German, Elsie moved on to spend many years as a legal secretary, including some time spent abroad and working on the private legal affairs of Judge Henry Homer, who later became Governor of Illinois.

Next week, Elsie will celebrate 100 years of life with an immediate family that includes three daughters, six grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. Needless to say, the family cherishes each and every moment of time spent with her.

Orville and Wilbur Wright set the stage for 100 years of aviation breakthroughs. In her own way, Elsie spent much the same amount of time accomplishing great things and inspiring others by always concentrating on the sunny side of life. Congratulations Elsie—you

are a wonderful example and a wonderful person.

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PRAISING SOUTH CAROLINA
BLACK HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this Friday I will have the distinct privilege of attending the 13th Annual South Carolina Black Hall of Fame induction ceremony in Columbia, SC. Ten South Carolinians will be inducted this year. Below is a list of the inductees:

The late Ethel Martin Bolden, a pioneer librarian; retired U.S. Army Col. John Theodore Bowden, Jr., a former professor of military science at South Carolina State University; Dr. Agnes Hildebrand Wilson Burgess, a distinguished Sumter educator; Dr. Alma Wallace Byrd, Benedict College professor and former state legislator; Charlie Mae Cromartie, former health care professional and businesswoman; Jim French, editor of The Charleston Chronicle; Lottie Gibson, a Greenville civil rights activist; the late Esau Jenkins, a John's Island civil right's activist; the late Rev. Dr. Westerberry Homer Neal, Sr., pastor of seven Midlands area churches; and Geraldine Pierce Zimmerman, 92-year-old Orangeburg community activist.

Ethel Bolden worked in Richland County public schools for 39 years and established the first black elementary school library at Waverly Elementary School. She also served at W.A. Perry Junior High School, and because of her competence and interpersonal skills, she successfully integrated the faculty at Dreher High School. She was a trustee of Richland County Public Library and worked tirelessly for construction of the modern library downtown, which opened in 1993. She passed away in October 2002.

Col. John Bowden began his military career in 1960 after completing the ROTC program at South Carolina State University. In 1983, he returned to the campus as commanding officer of the ROTC. Under his command, the unit became one of the best in the nation, supplying more commissioned officers to the U.S. Army than any other in the state or nation. He retired from the military in 1986 and since has worked in administrative positions at S.C. State, Voorhees College and Claflin University.

Dr. Agnes Burgess was the first black to be named Teacher of the Year in South Carolina and came out on top as a National Honor Roll Teacher in 1969. She taught French and journalism at Lincoln High School and served as advisor to the newspaper, which won 13 consecutive first-place ratings in the Scholastic Press Association competition. Also, she was the first black ever to be elected president of the South Carolina Education Association. In 1975, she joined the faculty at the University of South Carolina's College of Education and served as director of the Center for Community Education until her retirement in 1979.

Dr. Alma Byrd has served as a member of the Richland District #1 School Board and was a state legislator from 1991–1999. She was instrumental in placing the portraits of several

noted black South Carolinians in the State House. She was a founding member of the James R. Clark Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation and long-time president of the Columbia section of the National Council of Negro Women.

Charlie Cromartie was head evening nurse at Columbia Hospital prior to becoming owner/manager of Cromartie Enterprises. Her community service include being an advocate of Richland School District One board of Education, member of the League of Women Voters, poll manager of Ward 9, and past illustrious commandress of Cairo Temple No. 123. For more than 50 years, she has held leadership positions in Bishops Memorial A.M.E. Church.

Jim French established The Charleston Chronicle in 1971, six months after retiring as a U.S. Navy chief journalist with 26 years of service. He was a photo-journalist for the Navy's All Hands magazine. He was the first military reporter assigned to the Mekong Delta of Vietnam with the U.S. Army's 9th Infantry Division, and was station manager for radio and television stations on naval bases in Spain, Cuba and Puerto Rico. His weekly columns in The Chronicle challenge blacks to stand up and demand their rights as American citizens. He and his newspaper have received numerous awards from organizations in the Lowcountry.

Lottie Gibson has been a spokesperson for black and poor people in the Piedmont area for more than three decades. She is a member of Greenville County Council and was in the forefront May 17 when 5,000 supporters of the NAACP held a protest rally against the council for refusing to approve her proposal for an official paid holiday to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Esau Jenkins was a successful farmer and businesswoman who made an indelible mark as a crusader on behalf of poor black citizens of the Sea Islands from the 1940s until his death in 1972. His first project consisted of purchasing a bus to transport island children to public schools in Charleston. In 1948, he organized the Progressive Club to help educate adults who wanted to read the Bible, newspapers and the section of the state constitution required of those who wished to register to vote. In the 1950's, he worked with noted human rights activists Septima Pointstett Clark and Bernice Robinson to establish citizenship schools on John's Island, Wadmalaw Island and Edisto Island. And during the 1960s he continued to develop social, economic and political programs under the umbrella of the Citizens Committee of Charleston.

Rev. Dr. Westerberry Neal, a Hopkins native, was a pastor for nearly 60 years and public school teacher for 35 years. He was affectionately known as "Mr. Baptist of South Carolina." He was a trustee of Morris College in Sumter for 50 years and chairman for 35 years—the longest record of any chairman of an institution of higher learning in the state and nation. Additionally, he served on the board of directors of Victory Saving Bank for 28 years and was chairman for 15 years. Dr. Neal passed away on March 4, 2003 at the age of 94.

Geraldine Zimmerman helped her hometown become a better place by serving as a volunteer with many organizations, including the United Way, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Orangeburg Literacy Association,

the NAACP, and Church Women United. In the 1960's, she worked successfully to get recreational facilities for black youth. She also led a group of concerned citizens in the restoration of a 100-year-old cemetery that is now on the National Register of Historic Places. In recognition of her many achievements, the City of Orangeburg selected her as a Citizen of the Year and has erected a community center in her honor.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in thanking these ten individuals for their dedicated service to their communities and for their prime examples of leadership to our youth.

HONORING ELISE COGORNO

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Elise Cogorno, who after devoting 34 years of her life to teaching and inspiring public school students in New Jersey, is retiring this month. Whether in her role as one of the Nation's most esteemed Spanish teachers, or as an active leader in extracurricular activities for students, or as a volunteer in community programs, Elise Cogorno has been a remarkable and committed role model to thousands of children.

Born Elise Braunschweiger in 1946, her childhood was spent in Hillside, New Jersey. She and her family then moved to Morristown, New Jersey, where she attended high school. After receiving her education from Montclair State University, Elise Cogorno spent her entire 34 years of teaching in Teaneck, New Jersey—first in Thomas Jefferson Junior High School, and later at Teaneck High School. As an extraordinarily gifted teacher, Elise Cogorno motivated her students through creativity, humor, and enthusiasm. Her love for teaching generated a love for learning among her students.

I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting one of our Nation's finest teachers, Elise Cogorno, whose outstanding teaching abilities helped and inspired thousands of New Jersey students. Elise Cogorno's successful teaching career has proved invaluable for countless New Jersey students. She truly represents the best of New Jersey.

THE ASBESTOS CLAIMS TAX FAIRNESS ACT

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Asbestos Claims Tax Fairness Act. Asbestos liability issues have reached crisis stage. The costs of the current and potential lawsuits filed against these companies by claimants are staggering. More than 200,000 tort claims regarding exposure to asbestos are pending today, and more than 50,000 new claims are being filed each year.

Many former manufacturers of asbestos stopped using and distributing asbestos long

before 1986. However, most of these companies or their corporate descendants, are bankrupt or nearing bankruptcy. As a result, asbestos liabilities are being shouldered alone by the dwindling number of former asbestos manufacturers and distributors that remain in business. This spiraling cycle into bankruptcy means asbestos victims are faced with the decreasing likelihood that they will be compensated for their injuries in the future.

In the 107th Congress, along with more than 125 of our colleagues, my colleague from Georgia and I introduced tax legislation that would help provide compensation to victims of asbestos and help companies beset by asbestos liabilities to continue as viable employers. That bill, H.R. 1412, was the continuation of efforts begun in the 106th Congress. Since the beginning of that effort, the plight for victims has worsened and the economic viability of those entities responsible for meeting those obligations has deteriorated significantly.

Today I again introduce a bill that will help to ensure that there are funds available to pay victims of asbestos exposure.

The legislation has two components. First, it would increase the amount of resources available to pay injured asbestos victims by exempting from federal tax settlement funds established to pay asbestos victims. Hundreds of thousands of individuals rely on these funds for compensation. Under current law, these funds are taxed at the top income tax rate of 35-percent rate.

Second, the legislation would ease tax-law limitations on asbestos defendants who are emerging from bankruptcy. More than 60 companies currently paying asbestos victims have been forced into bankruptcy. Our legislation would exempt these companies from certain tax-law rules that limit use of a bankrupt company's tax assets. This relief would be provided only in situations where the company's restructuring in bankruptcy results in the company continuing as a going concern.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation I am introducing today is not intended to solve all of the problems caused by the asbestos crisis. But these measures will help companies emerge as soon as possible from bankruptcy, minimizing the potential for job losses in the economy and reducing the risk of lost benefits to asbestos claimants. I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

IN MEMORY OF MICHAEL ROBERTS AND THOSE WHO PAID THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE IN VIETNAM

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House to remember one of Mississippi's native sons who paid the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War, and returns to us just this year for his proper internment at Arlington National Cemetery.

This week, the brothers and sisters of Michael L. Roberts, a U.S. Navy Petty Officer from Purvis, Mississippi, will travel to Washington, DC to lay their missing brother to rest. He and eight of his colleagues on a secret reconnaissance mission in 1968 crashed and died in the Laotian jungle. Their mission had

been to drop sensors designed to detect enemy movements in our struggle with communist North Vietnam.

Their Navy OP-2E Neptune aircraft took off from Thailand on January 11, 1968, but never returned. Two weeks later an Air Force air crew photographed what appeared to be the crash site, but enemy activity in the area prevented a recovery operation. Between 1993 and 2002, six US-Laotian investigation teams interviewed villagers in the surrounding area, gathered aircraft debris and surveyed the purported crash site scattered on two ledges of Phou Louang Mountain in Khammouan Province.

Then during a 1996 visit, team members recovered identification cards for several crew members as well as human remains. Recovery missions in 2001 and 2002 yielded additional remains, as well as identification of other crew members.

Michael Roberts was a graduate of Purvis High School and Pearl River Junior College. Out of college, he enlisted in the Navy. He was twenty-four years old when his mission went missing.

In addition to Michael Roberts, his eight friends and companions were Navy Commander Delbert Olson of Casselton, North Dakota; Lieutenants Denis Anderson of Hope, Kansas, Arthur Buck of Sandusky, Ohio, and Philip Stevens of Twin Lake, Michigan; and Petty Officers Richard Mancini of Amsterdam, New York, Donald Thoresen and Kenneth Widon of Detroit, Michigan and Gale Siow of Huntington Park, California.

More than 1,900 Americans are still missing in action from the Vietnam War. While we mourn their losses, there is some joy that the families of these nine men can finally experience closure of this thirty-five year old wound.

For over two centuries, the Territory and State of Mississippi has paid the price of freedom with the blood of our sons and daughters. Whether their sacrifice still remains hidden in a foreign land, or they rest in a small country churchyard, or they are honored in our country's national cemetery, we will always remember them—we will always honor them—we will continue to fight for the dreams they gave their very lives to secure for us and future generations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TRIBUTE TO LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS UNDER LAW

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay special tribute to the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law for their great work in promoting civil rights and equal justice.

The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, was formed in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy, to involve the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination. The establishment of the Committee sought to fulfill the expectation of America's leaders that the private bar become an active force in the continuing struggles for